

LETTERS 3

ADDRESSED TO

*Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury,*MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR
THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK.

By a FREEHOLDER. H

L O N D O N ;

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J. WALTERS, *Charing Cross*.



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establishment

Permit me, therefore, as one of
your constituents, to dedicate to

you the following letter, which

Sir Thomas Charles Banbury.

to increase the naval establishment
of Great Britain, but likewise to fix

it upon such principles,

AS in your address, to the free-
holders of the county of
Suffolk, previous to the late gene-
ral election, you have declared your-
self a friend, to that mode of war,
which by reducing our military,

the B may

may enable us to augment our naval establishment---

Permit me, therefore, as one of your constituents, to dedicate to you the following letters, which suggest ideas calculated, not only to increase the naval establishment of Great Britain, but likewise to fix it upon such principles, as are permanent and lasting. In the following sheets, Sir, I have also shewn, that it is equally necessary, to introduce the same fixed ideas of support, into the establishment of the British army; since it is only from
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the co-operation of their powers, that our liberty and property can be secured to us, both at home and abroad.

When the strength and resources of Great Britain, have been represented of late, by some men to all Europe, as if she were entirely exhausted, and in her wane of political importance---When our enemies both at home and abroad, have endeavoured to paint her, as in her last gasp of military effort; it then becomes the duty, Sir, of every real well-wisher to his country, to un-

mask these representations, if false, and in the language of your Address to the county of Suffolk : “ unbiassed by selfish or party motives, to be ever studious to support such measures as appear most conducive to the prosperity of our country, whether these measures are proposed by the ministers of the crown or their opponents.”

The following letters lay claim to no particular merit, in refinement of language and composition, though in point of subject matter, they deserve the serious consideration

tion of every man of judgment, in this country. They contain some proofs, that however Great Britain may be exhausted in her public resources of taxation; still it is in her power, to brace the sinews of her naval and military arm, so as to repel all the attacks of her natural enemies. If the improvements, Sir, suggested in these letters, for the support of the navy and army, are adopted by government; whatever may be the future fate of the public debts of this country, still we shall preserve the reputation and reality, of being powerful both by
 sea

sea and land. It is now high time, that this circumstance should be well considered by the political well-wishers of the British constitution; because when the bubble of public credit breaks, as it must ere long, in the present increasing ratio of the expences of war: we may by such precautions as are here proposed, prevent the transfer of our maritime sovereignty to other nations, who at present only wish for some such internal shock, happening to the credit of Great Britain, as a coup-de-grace to her naval strength and resources.

I have

I have the satisfaction, Sir, to subscribe myself *One of your Constituents*, believing, your parliamentary conduct will always be regulated by the noble sentiments contained in your address to the county of Suffolk.

LETTER

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folk.

LETTER

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Sir, as applicable to the present situation
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fore they can recover from the

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IN the history of Great Britain, it is
a point of the greatest importance, to
ascertain those causes, which have brought
her to any degree of eminence, above
other nations, in the constitutions of her
commercial, civil, and warlike establish-
ments.

ments. The following extract from Sir John Dalrymple's Review of the political state of England, before the restoration, points them out, in so masterly a manner, that I beg leave to quote it, Sir, as applicable to the present situation of affairs in America, and, I hope, prophetic of the future. "The civil wars
 " of James the Second, (says Sir John,)
 " mark that state of disorder into which
 " high-spirited nations are plunged, before they can accomplish a regular
 " system of liberty, or are subject to a regular system of prerogative.

" It is a characteristic of Providence,
 " which human wisdom should not however attempt to imitate, to employ
 " apparent evils for the attainment of
 " real good, and to render dissension,

" as

“ as well as union, beneficial to man-
 “ kind.

“ The British nation has made its
 “ way through many dangers and trou-
 “ bles: the parties, by which it has
 “ been agitated, may have, each in their
 “ turns, run to extremes: but the re-
 “ sult of the whole has been a consti-
 “ tution, which by securing to all orders
 “ of men the rights of mankind, has
 “ never been equalled in any age or
 “ nation. Nor is this blessing to be va-
 “ lued for itself, more than for the
 “ national vigour and character which
 “ have been acquired in the attainment
 “ of it. Men are generally formed by
 “ their occupations and pursuits: ac-
 “ customed to important and perilous

“ occasions, and engaged in the worthiest
 “ pursuits, those of equal justice and
 “ freedom, they become, like the sub-
 “ jects of Britain, high-minded, capable
 “ and brave. From the continual at-
 “ tention to public affairs the people
 “ have acquired a public and generous
 “ spirit from the vigour and confidence
 “ of men inured to affairs; and secured
 “ in their rights, they have derived
 “ their success in every branch of sci-
 “ ence, and of every liberal and mecha-
 “ nical art, making manifest to all this
 “ animating truth; that the genius of
 “ nations is always in proportion to
 “ their spirit. We are apt to regret as
 “ an evil the disputes and agitations of
 “ a free people: forgetting that, man’s
 “ nature

“ nature being active, he must continue
 “ to act or cease to exist.”

Thus, Sir, to take off the edge of national animosity and prejudice, we should regard the present contest, between Great Britain and the American colonies, like certain diseases, in the life of an individual, that, as in the animal nature of man there are peccant humours that require to be carried off to improve his constitution; so, in the general history of nations, their public jealousies and animosities must, some time or other, have vent in the channel of war, until dear bought experience teaches them the proper concessions to be made to one another, as the best cement of peace and tranquillity.

lity. The most unprejudiced and impartial manner, therefore, to consider the merit and demerit of the American war, is to regard it as a question of dominion and right, that must have been agitated in some particular period of the history of both nations. In this point of view, it is much better for Great Britain, that it began before the year 1780, than in any after period. It is a certain fact, that the exertions of military strength that Great Britain and America, have made against one another, would have been sufficient, had they been united, to have stripped the French and Spaniards of every foreign settlement, they are now in possession of. It is now evident, that Great Britain has given to Ireland every indulgence.

gence in point of trade, that America can in justice require: a proper consideration of this, together with the above particulars, should teach them both to unite their arms, as in 1759. As we all speak the same language, and breathe the same spirit of liberty, in our ideas of religion and government; we are much more likely to remain lasting friends, when once reconciled, than if dissimilar in these respects. The present connexion, between France and America, can never be of a lasting nature; considering the difference, between their republican and arbitrary principles of government. I shall prove, therefore, in the sequel of these letters, that the American colonies have every motive, both of interest and fear, to induce

duce them to accede to terms of union with Great Britain and Ireland, in preference to any other power in Europe. 1st. Considering the similarity in their ideas of government. 2dly. Considering the importance of the places in America, now in the possession of Great Britain.

In an empire, composed as the British, of countries detached and at a distance from one another; there seems to be a great jealousy of the parent country, interfering in the internal taxation of the other component parts of it. This circumstance will be made fully evident to us, when divesting ourselves of prejudice and party principles, we inquire into the reasons that gave rise to these unlucky disturbances with the American colonies,

colonies. I dare say, Sir, your private opinion coincides with mine; that party divisions in this country, have made both factions in it, objects of military ridicule, to our natural enemies and the various colonies of America. During the emulous and contentious claims of private interest and advantage, they have lost sight of a judicious direction of what military and naval strength has been set in motion, since the commencement of this American contest. I may, in opposition to the political consequences, flowing from such conduct, beg leave to observe, that the plans proposed in the following letters, in their consequences, tend not only to remove these baneful effects of party factions in this country, by calling off

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their attention to public spirited plans of military enterprise ; but likewise, suggest those honourable and general ideas, which tend to union and reconciliation with Ireland and America.

It has long been a common and hackneyed observation, that the excellency of the constitution of England consists, in having fixed laws—That most of her civil and commercial advantages flow from this source. If this is really the case, I see no reason, Sir, why the same boasted advantage should not be introduced into the establishments, both of the navy and army of the British empire. To do this, some pervading principles of taxation should be fixed upon ; such as are applicable to all the component parts of it.

it. For instance, was the land tax, in Great Britain, invariably appropriated for the support of the navy, and the same idea of taxation, proposed to all the other parts of the British empire; I make not the least doubt, that the Irish, and Americans, and the inhabitants of our settlements in the East and West Indies would all cheerfully consent, to such a mode of taxation—Each country reciprocally binding the other, in such an act. The tax here proposed, viz. that of the present land tax, is the most productive of all taxes, and at the same time, the most certain. It may, therefore, be fairly presumed, that this idea of common and general taxation would be acceded to by all the component parts of the empire, from the popularity of the idea; since the

navy has ever been esteemed the bulwark of it. Other general taxes should, in the same manner, be appropriated invariably, for the support of our foreign garrisons, such as Gibraltar and Minorca. It is now high time that this question should be well weighed by the political well-wishers of this country; viz. What general plan of taxation will be the most popular, in such an empire as the British? The consequences flowing from the one here proposed are as follow.

1st. The invariable appropriation of certain taxes, for the naval and military exigencies of the British empire, would remove every future cause of discontent, and jealousy of the mother country, both
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in Ireland and America. When the grants of public money are invariably appropriated, then every idea of embezzlement is removed ; since the commissioners of accounts appointed by Great Britain, Ireland, America, and every other part of the British empire, would then have only to inspect, and superintend a just and honest appropriation of the money, raised for the support of the British navy and army.

2dly. The longer peace continues, the more these funds will increase, to provide for the exigencies of war. The increasing state of them, will therefore not only support the commercial credit of the British empire, but deter other nations from declaring war against it.

3dly.

3dly. The great point of defect, in the constitution of Great Britain, is this, that the violence of parties in state matters, obliges government to make use of a certain secret argument to secure to its interest, a majority of votes, in a certain senate. Was not this done, perhaps the necessary supplies, in time of war, would be withheld; since, to obtain their seats, they are obliged to make use of the above secret argument; so they expect the same return from government. Nothing would tend so much to cure this evil, and to introduce a fundamental and constitutional remedy for it, than a fixed and invariable appropriation of certain taxes, for the various naval and military exigencies of the state.

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When such a scheme takes place, the necessity of b***** and c*rr***** is, in great measure, superseded, the executive hands of government are strengthened, and the plans of national finance and œconomy, proposed by Mr. Pulteney and Mr. Burke, are then set in motion.

4thly. If all the circumstances and consequences of the above proposed plan of taxation are properly considered, I think there is a fair prospect, in future, of easing England of that accumulation of taxes, she has been subject to, during former wars, in defence of the British empire. Besides, the idea of a naval union in the British empire, may counteract, and greatly defeat all the dangerous consequences that may arise to her boasted
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sovereignty of the sea, from the present naval coalition of the Northern powers of Europe.

I shall conclude, Sir, this part of my letter, with an important and serious observation; that the whole political writings of Lord Bolingbroke, display the advantages of the plan of appropriation here proposed. This eminent writer, with all the elegance of Cicero, and the patriotic fire of Sidney or Russell, opposed, in its infancy, the present corrupted scheme of funding; the effects of which, if not counteracted by proper salutary measures, will entail an increasing ratio of curse, upon the liberty and property of all British subjects.

Having

Having now, Sir, pointed out the fund, that ought to be appropriated for the support of the British navy; I proceed to lay before you, a few loose thoughts, upon the present method of impress, for the sea service of Great Britain.

The present method of impress for the sea service of this country, may admit of great improvements in point of enforcement and regularity, through all the British empire. If the board of admiralty wish to man the navy expeditely, they should specify in the gazette the number of seamen and landsmen wanted for government service; 2dly. They should likewise lay a strict embargo upon all the ports of Great Britain until the

demands of government for seamen are satisfied. The same idea should be extended, *mutatis mutandis*, to Ireland, and all other parts of naval importance, in the British dominions.

This method would oblige the merchants and masters of ships in every port of Great Britain, and her other possessions, to assist government as much as possible in procuring men both by bounties and their own personal influence, because the embargo upon their trade will not be taken off until the number of men specified in the gazette is procured. According to the present method of impress the ports are open, the masters of ships are at liberty to go to sea, if their ships crews can elude the
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Vigilance of the press gangs. But if they were shut during the impress for government service, the seamen would be under the necessity, from the want of bread, to enter on board of the men of war. When the number of seamen specified in the gazette is obtained, all impress should cease, and the public promise of government should be kept sacred, that no impress shall take place again until proper notice is given of it in the public gazette. It is evident this method of manning the navy would cause much less stagnation in trade than the one now in use. According to the present method of impressing seamen the merchants have no interest in assisting government, since the impress never ceases during the continuance of the war.

Whereas, by the present proposal of specifying in the gazette the number of seamen wanted for manning the navy, every considerable sea port in Great Britain and Ireland, sensible of the consequences of an embargo upon their shipping, would soon know the exact quota of men they ought to contribute, when the demand is made from government. The society of watermen in the port of London is a case in point, who upon the eve of every war send out five hundred or a thousand men for the use of the navy.

To man the navy quickly, the impress should be general over the kingdom, or particular country where it is enforced. The constables of each hundred should be obliged to examine that
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there are no seamen skulking about in their respective districts. When there is a hot press upon the maritime parts of the kingdom, the seamen always retire into the country, thinking to conceal themselves. It is this idea of concealment therefore, that prevents them from entering into the king's service. But was this removed, they would find no asylum, and would find it their interest to enter on board the men of war as soon as possible. The press should not be local and confined to the sea ports and coasts, but general over the kingdom. The present method of that service is attended with the following inconveniences. 1st. To the merchant, from the stagnation it puts to trade. 2dly. To the seaman, because from the idea of concealment,

ecalment, he flies to the country, and
 is thrown out of employment. 3dly. To
 government, because they do not man
 their ships near so quick as they would
 do, were they to specify to the mer-
 chants the number of men wanted for
 public service, and extend the press to
 the internal parts of the kingdom, as
 well as the sea coast. This might be
 easily done by making it a pecuniary
 penalty to any house holder, inn keeper
 or master of a public house to harbour
 a seaman knowingly, without giving in-
 formation to a neighbouring justice of
 the peace, or to the constables of the
 hundred. Upon annexing a penalty to
 the default, there should likewise be a
 more considerable reward for information
 than the present. At the same time, it

is a circumstance, that merits particular observation, that seamen deserve every encouragement, that can possibly be given to them, in this country. They should, therefore, have a legal demand, besides their allowance from the establishment of Greenwich, upon their respective parishes, for a certain annual pension, increasing in the ratio of time passed in the king's service. So useful and honourable subjects should meet with every encouragement and support, that the constitution and resources of the British empire can possibly afford.

As a further support to the British navy, there should be in every parish, an annual meeting of the principal inhabitants, to prick down the names of
 what

what men, can be spared from it, for the service of the navy. Such meeting to be composed of gentlemen of landed property, or eminent farmers. This proposal would remove the following objection to the late impress-act. When any one is brought before the commissioners appointed by that act, being so few in number, they are afraid to act, from dread of injury to their persons or property. The objection would be removed, when it is made a general act of the principal inhabitants of each parish, to send off for the service of the navy, those idle fellows and vagabonds, who are the bane and pest of the neighbourhood where they reside.

to some one who is doing of **LETTER**

L E T T E R II.

S I R,

I Beg leave to submit to your candid
consideration the following sheets,
which point out the present necessity,
of obliging each parish in Great Bri-
tain, and her other dominions, to afford
a certain quota of men, to recruit the

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old

old establishment of her regular army. To the parent country of so extensive an empire as the British, having possessions in every part of the globe, many external circumstances must happen in the course of human affairs, which, in a certain degree, must make her alter her internal constitution, so as to secure those distant possessions. The question, therefore, in regard to these internal alterations, turns upon this nice pivot, will they, when they take place, be of more advantage than disadvantage to her; or, in other words, is a small internal inconvenience to be borne, for the sake of a great external blessing, which enables hundreds of families to live at home, in the parent state, in ease and affluence? When we consider
then,

then, the present state of affairs in America and the West Indies, the necessity of adopting the following measures, will be fully justified, when tried by the above standard. In every country, there are but two ways in which the individuals of it, can pay the tribute of military service due to the government, they are under—viz. either by their own personal service, or by paying an able substitute. Whatever arguments, therefore, are applicable to individuals in regard to this point, are, still stronger when applied to collective bodies of men. The following proposal can never, therefore, be objected to by the inhabitants of any parish, as fundamentally inconsistent with the ideas of British liberty; when the above alter-

native is offered by government to them, the choice or preference is an act of their own will.

It was a maxim, Sir, observed by the Romans in their conquests, that they adopted every improvement in the art of war, wherein they thought themselves excelled by their enemy. This circumstance raised that nation to a greater pitch of greatness, than any other in ancient history. Far from adhering obstinately, like other nations, to the system of war they were taught by their forefathers, they prudently varied it according to the nature of the resistance they met with, and in their progressive conquest of the then known world, rolled on like a ball

of

of snow gathering strength from every nation they left behind.

When we see that Rome, even the former mistress of the world, never blushed to own herself capable of being taught, ought not so illustrious an example to teach Great Britain, that she may confess herself still under the corrective rod of experience? As the French have of late adopted many improvements from the British navy, it becomes us therefore to examine what we can glean from them. The most important that presents itself to our consideration, is one introduced into France by Lewis the fourteenth, who obliged each parish of his kingdom, to afford a number of recruits for the army, according to its number of inhabitants fit to

to carry arms. Thus, in France the military exigency of the state is immediately supplied, and the demand of recruits for the army is never felt as a grievance, since it is so equally divided among so many parishes. In Great Britain were they to adopt this plan, it would greatly strengthen the executive hands of government, and enable it to anticipate many evils, that may happen to this country upon the commencement of a war; since the constitution of this country is such, that it empowers naval officers to man their ships immediately, by impressing men, it is certainly a ridiculous circumstance, that the army is not put upon as advantageous a footing. It is only from the co-operation of their powers, that either our own security at home can be preserved, our

enemies

enemies foreign settlements attacked to advantage, or our own defended when invaded.

It has been often agitated as a point of speculation, whether or not the British army would be better supplied with recruits, by obliging each parish to turn out a proportional quota of men, than by the present method of beating up. In my opinion, it admits of no doubt, that the first mentioned method is preferable to the latter, and will be productive of more general good to the British service. The difficulty of contriving an effectual plan for recruiting the army, consists in the following circumstance; that it should be calculated so as to fix the men as volunteers in
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the service, and not drive them like brutes upon compulsion. A certain degree of compulsion is absolutely necessary to secure a certain return of men to the secretary at war, but it should be of such a nature, as to fall more upon public bodies of men, than upon individuals.

The secretary at war, therefore, should be required annually or half-yearly, to specify to the lord lieutenant and sheriff of each county, what is the proportion of men, they are to afford for the service of the ensuing year. This he may easily determine, from a preceding year's account, given in at the quarter sessions, by the church wardens of each parish upon oath, of the number of men fit

to

to carry arms in each county or parish. Thus the quota of recruits for the regulars, would be certified to the deputy lieutenants, and by them the allotment of men for each parish. The parishes must then by premiums procure volunteers, if practicable, if not, they must ballot for the service, as in the case of the militia. The parish premiums to volunteers should be paid out of the poor rates, which is the most equal parish cess extant. The alternative of giving bounties for volunteers, or to risk by ballot a personal service, is a stimulus, that will compel parishes to hold out sufficient premiums, to invite volunteers into the service. Establishing county regiments would accelerate the raising of parish volunteers.

To consider this subject therefore, in the proper manner it ought to be, I shall proceed, Sir, to treat of it in the following manner: 1st. State the public and private inconveniences of the present method of beating up. 2dly. Contrast to it the public and present necessity of the personal service here required.

The first circumstance, that presents itself to our consideration, in stating the public disadvantages of the present method of recruiting the British army, is the uncertainty of the returns of men, from the officers upon that service, to the secretary at war. Thus, according to the present method, the exigencies of the state can never be provided for,

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in that regular manner, they ought to be. It will always be the case, Sir, and may it ever remain so, that the inhabitants of the British empire, will reason freely, concerning the propriety or impropriety of the measures, pursued by their governors. If they approve of them, (in the language of address,) they will support them with their lives and fortunes. If they disapprove, government will find great difficulty in recruiting the army. From the number of news papers now circulating in every alehouse of Great Britain and Ireland, the common people, in general, form their political opinions, from the representation of public affairs, given in the republican papers, now disseminated so universally over every part of these king-

doms. This observation is well verified, in the beginning of this American war, when government found so much difficulty in recruiting the old establishment of the army, that they were obliged to hire troops from Germany, and Lord Barrington, from the absolute necessity of the service, was compelled to add twelve new regiments to the old establishment. Commissions were granted to the officers, on condition, of their raising a certain quota of men, and the high bounties given, were the only inducement, that could have brought so many men to list at that time. From the particulars mentioned above, it may be justly inferred, that the public service would be carried on more expeditely and uniformly, by obliging each parish to

to turn out a certain number of men, according to the exigency of the state.

It may be mentioned too as a private inconvenience of the present method of enlisting men, that no attention is paid to this circumstance, whether or not, a man has a large family; or whether he is a manufacturer, the loss of whom is a detriment to trade. All these circumstances prove, that it is bad policy in any commercial state, to allow an indiscriminate kidnapping of men for its military service; when certainly better men can be procured by ballot, or from the deliberate choice of the gentlemen of each parish. There is one circumstance, which recommends strongly the plan here proposed, that the demand for
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men falls so lightly upon the different parishes, as not to be felt as a grievance. Whereas in the late mode of raising men in Scotland, for the new levies, more particularly in the Highlands, some districts were almost depopulated, and many of the best manufacturers of the West of Scotland, swept away to America, where one day or other they will establish those very manufactures, they used to export to that country. When the common people of England can earn a shilling, one shilling and sixpence, or two shillings a day by labour, it is ridiculous to suppose, they will prefer starving upon six pence, which is the neat pay of a common soldier. The high price of labour also paid of late, by the farmers and master manufacturers to their
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workmen, is another reason, why the recruiting service has not succeeded so well in England as it used to do. Tho' many have manifested a laudable and public spirit, in regard to home defence, yet they are not at all inclined to hazard their lives abroad. This aversion to serving in the army abroad, is growing stronger and stronger every day among the common people of this country; government must therefore, adopt some plan similar to the one here proposed, to recruit the British army effectually. When our natural enemies upon the continent of Europe have such immense standing armies, and are at the same time equal, if not superior to us by sea, in number of ships and men, it is surely the height of folly and madness

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not to put our army upon an equal respectable footing. Without we do it soon, we may be stripped of most of our foreign settlements, as we have lost several valuable sugar islands already. All these losses are owing to the present defective plan of recruiting the British army. So far from government being able to send a sufficient number of men to garrison our sugar islands, they had not even men enough to answer the demands of the American service. Thus, the hands of government must always be tied up in regard to military enterprise, as long as the present mode of recruiting the army continues in force. Until it is altered, we can strike no blow to advantage upon the commencement of a war, nor can we parry one

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effectually when aimed at us. May the experience we have gained in this American contest, teach us to adopt such plans, as will bring the whole strength of the British empire to bear effectually upon our natural enemies. Procrastination in military operations must be the ruin of any country, when put to such immense expence as Great Britain is at present, in the maintenance of fleets and armies, in distant parts of the globe. It is superfluous to point out any more, the many public advantages that would result from the plan here suggested, if properly enforced by act of parliament. France and Spain, Sir, are too sensible of the defect of the British service, in regard to the idea of raising men expeditely as volunteers. They must know

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therefore, it must require some considerable time, before our army is so recruited and disciplined, as to oppose their veteran troops in the field. Besides, the more the above powers increase in maritime strength, it becomes every day more necessary, that the British empire should attend to the most effectual and most patriotic means of keeping up a respectable standing force for her defence, both at home and abroad.

From a view therefore, Sir, of the number of men employed in the land service, during each year of the Duke of Marlborough's wars; specifying the killed and wounded—from the same view of the war between the year 1740 and 1750—from the same view also of the
last

last war, we shall be enabled to obtain the exact mean of the number of men required for the British army, during the most pressing exigency of war; and we shall be enabled to ascertain the number of recruits that may be required in any future war. Thus, to conclude, this mean ascertained, from the three great continental wars, that Great Britain has been engaged in, upon the theatre of Europe, may very properly be opposed, to the mean of men taken, during this American continental war; which will exhibit a curious contrast to the military speculators, both of our own and foreign nations.

Considering the powerful enemies confederated now against this country, it

becomes a point of greater importance every day, to lay before the public, every idea or plan, that is likely to induce seamen or landsmen, to enter into our naval or military service. The two most operative circumstances to promote this, are certain ideas of present encouragement and future support, in old age. In regard to the former, I am confident, that in no European service, either by sea or land, are men better clothed and fed, than in the British service. The deficiency or fault consists, in our not having proper and adequate ideas of future support, for our seamen and soldiers, increasing in the ratio of the length of time spent by them in the service of their country. To do this, the various funds of Greenwich and

and Chelsea hospitals, should be thrown into one general fund. From which, annual pensions should be paid to seamen and soldiers, increasing according to the number of years, they have served, or the wounds they have received. This pension should only be in part, the residue to be made up by parish pensions, under controul of the deputy lieutenants of each county. This method of providing for old sick and maimed sailors and soldiers, would save much money, now laid out in the maintenance of Greenwich and Chelsea hospitals; as great part of the money granted by parliament for the support of the old men, is consumed by the officers of the hospitals, and in repairing the buildings. An old soldier or sailor would live with much more

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comfort, when he has his residence in his own parish, among his relations and former neighbours, and receive a more ample maintenance, than he does at present, according to the establishment of either of the above hospitals.

The political and military inferences, from the above proposed plan for recruiting the British army, are as follow.

1st. By obliging each parish, to afford a proportional quota of men, for the service of the regular army, it will be established, as a point of public honour and emulation, through all the extent of the British dominions, which district shall supply the British army, with the ablest and best-bodied recruits.

2dly.

2dly. It will prevent that influx of new rank, into the British army, which has of late taken place, so much to the dissatisfaction of the honoured veterans of that service; by superseding entirely, the necessity of raising new corps. In doing which, such high bounties have been given, as will in the long run, leave the standards of the old regiments deserted, and ruin the recruiting service so much in general, that the riches of Cræsus would scarce be adequate to the purpose, of recruiting the British army.

The last inference is the most important of all—That, in calling forth the different parishes, through the whole
 extent

extent of the British dominions, to afford, for the use of the regular army, a quota of men proportionate to the number fit to carry arms in each, we are much more likely to remove those foolish national ideas and prejudices, which at present, sow the seeds of discontent and disunion, in all the component parts of the empire. I am confident, Sir, that the Irish and Americans, would accede to the terms of a naval and military union, with Great Britain, as the most honourable and general idea, to remove all jealousy in commercial concerns. The plan suggested in this tract, for recruiting the British army, which is calculated to produce this effect, is founded upon the same principles, as that of parliamentary representation; whatever arguments

are

are therefore applicable to the one, may *a fortiori* be applied to the other.

When the land tax, Sir, is appropriated for the support of the British navy, according to the plan specified in the preceding letter, it is evident, the militia of each county, must be supported from some other resources of taxation. The fixing of these, should be left to the determination of each county or district. This plan throws the whole expence of the militia establishment, as to daily support, upon the respective counties or districts they belong to, which would be attended with the following consequences;

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1st.

1st. It would enable each county or district, by a jury of their own inhabitants, to agree upon such assessments or modes of taxation, as are most suitable to the natural riches of it, whether they consist in agriculture or commerce. This would be much more suitable to the real spirit of British liberty, than by maintaining the militia, from general taxes, that frequently fall heavy upon the most useful class of subjects, and leave those exempted, who are the fittest objects of such taxation.

2dly. Each county or district might then have the power, during war or peace, to increase or diminish the pay of their respective corps of militia, according to the

the present employment of them, viz. Whether they are called out to the general duty of the camp, or employed in works of a public nature, in the particular county or district they belong to.

3dly. It is evident, that the inhabitants of each county or district, are the best judges of their own resources of taxation—These might arise, from taking the management of the high roads into their own hands, and employing their militia upon that service, or any other work of a public nature—from licensing annually retailers in trade universally, leaving the merchant and manufacturer free—from a tax, increasing in the ratio, of each person's landed or moneyed fortune, this to be computed

by a jury of their own inhabitants, upon the most liberal and equitable principles.

4thly. By leaving the support of the militia, to the determination of the inhabitants of each county or district, both in regard to the ratio of their pay, and the mode of assessment or tax used in levying it, it will excite an emulation for the internal defence of each part of the British dominions, among gentlemen of fortune. 1st. By inducing them, to serve without pay or emolument, when the expence of maintaining their respective corps, falls upon themselves. 2dly. By exciting an emulation, among the inhabitants of each county or district, to increase the establishment of their

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respective corps of militia, according to the danger or exigencies of the state. Every idea or plan, Sir, that strengthens the internal military system of each country, upon patriotic principles, will meet with encouragement and support, from the English, as a brave and generous people. If the inhabitants of Ireland, are able to raise so large a military force to defend their country, in point of association, certainly, so rich and opulent a kingdom as England, could with ease, raise twice the number. A proper establishment of such an idea in Great Britain, as in Ireland, would render us invulnerable at home, and enable government, to detach our fleets more abroad, to protect our commercial interests, in distant parts of the globe.

I shall conclude this letter, Sir, with a proposal, that tends greatly, to strengthen the internal military force of Great Britain; viz. That the money now levied in London and its *environs*, for the maintenance of watchmen, should be appropriated to the purpose, of establishing a proper military watch. These men being under military law, would be much more careful and attentive, when upon duty, than they are at present. Less money would be required to pay and clothe them then, than according to their present establishment. These corps should be composed of stout men, who have at least served ten years in the regular army, able to do their duty, and not of old infirm men, who should more
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properly be sent to Chelsea hospital, than be employed, in the watch and safeguard of so great a city as London. If the same idea was extended, upon a smaller scale, to all the principal towns in Great Britain, it would add greatly to the internal force of the kingdom, since ten thousand men might be supported upon such an establishment. The command of such men should belong to the sheriff of each county, and the appointment to the commander in chief of the regular army. It is absolutely necessary, that these men should have served a certain time in the regular army, to teach them proper ideas of subordination and discipline. In regard to associations, these men would serve as inferior officers, to teach the common
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men their manual exercise, which institution would fully answer all the purposes intended, by Lord Barrington's plan of association to prevent private property being pillaged, by the disaffected, in case of an invasion; when the regulars and militia are called from the internal parts of the kingdom, to the defence of the sea coast.

As the sheriff of each county would have the command of such men, similar in some degree to the *Maréchaussée* of France, so he has it in his power, according to the nature of the necessity, to put what arms he pleases in their hands. The late disturbances and riots in London, show that the common civil power is inadequate to the purpose, of
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suppreſſing or reſtraining ſuch. There is likewise a particular advantage, attending ſuch an inſtitution, as the one here propoſed, that in caſe of a repetition of ſuch diſturbances, as lately happened in London, watchmen acting in the character of a military force, as here propoſed, will be much more likely, to diſcover the ringleaders of ſuch riots, from their general knowledge of the haunts and perſons, of moſt men reſident in the metropolis.

L E T T E R I I I .

S I R,

IT is a maxim established in the school of experience, that necessity has no law ; therefore, when the urgency of the case is such, that self-preservation requires it, it is lawful and commendable in each nation to plan their military measures in such a manner, as to advance the in-

terests of their own subjects, but lessen those of their antagonist.—Assuming this as an axiom in politics, I shall proceed to deduce the following military corollary from it.

In all wars contending parties draw the sword with an idea of gaining honour, obtaining territorial acquisition, or securing some commercial advantage. In regard to the first of these articles, Great Britain may join issue with Sir John Falstaff in his famous definition of honour, when we estimate all the advantages she has reaped from her continental wars.

From the nature of the British government, compared with that of France, it will always be in the power of the latter, upon the commencement of any war, to

come

come sooner to her meridian of strength; since her arbitrary form of constitution enables her to command the immediate services and purses of her subjects. Tho' this is a defect, under which Great Britain has smarted, upon the beginning of several ruptures with France, yet in the long run of the contest, when the martial spirit of Britons has been roused, the French have been obliged to yield the palm of victory. The real strength of Great Britain and Ireland, compared with other nations, consists in their insular situation, so that their fleets can secure them from any foreign invasion. The want of this advantage, and as a consequence, that of the sovereignty of the sea, must therefore render the tenure of all insular possessions more uncertain and precarious to France and Spain. This
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circumstance proves that the most valuable acquisitions that Great Britain can make, are islands. It was surely then a most unfortunate circumstance, when we had possession last war of the Havannah, Martinico, and most of the French islands in the West Indies, that we did not rather keep them, than take in exchange such large tracts of uncultivated parts in America.

Lamenting this oversight then committed in the Cabinet, and earnestly wishing to recover an advantage so impolitickly given up—I beg leave to lay before the public the following scheme of military enterprise, viz. Supposing an act of parliament was passed, granting the real property of the island of St. Domingo or Martinico, or
any

any other island belonging to Spain, to any number of monied men, who would subscribe a sum of money adequate to the reduction of them: I make no doubt but that a sufficient sum would be obtained upon this plan, and even more than can be raised upon the present dangerous scheme of funding. The hazard in this is not so great, as the danger of our being obliged to reduce the present ratio of interest in the public funds. The gross value of these islands may be estimated to be a sum six times greater than what is necessary to defray the expence of reduction. This would be a sufficient inducement to the West India merchants and other monied men of this country, to hazard their property in such a field of adventure. By pursuing such a measure
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the value of their possessions in that part of the world would rise greatly above their present *par*. And the assurance would be less upon their homeward bound ships, when our natural enemies are deprived of their best harbours, where their privateers find at present an asylum.

The terms between Government and the Subscribers may be as follow :

1st. Upon the faith of an act of parliament, the absolute property of the island to be reduced is granted to the subscribers.

2dly. Upon passing the act, the money is to be deposited in the Bank of England.

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The consequences flowing from this proposal are these :

1st. The French knowing the ultimatum they may expect from Great Britain, will be extremely cautious of provoking her resentment. In former wars, they commonly regained in the cabinet, what they lost in the field, but according to this plan, all their artifice, cunning, and graces, which Lord Chesterfield regards as important essentials in the cabinet, will be of no importance or avail to them.

2dly. As private interest is the chief principle that leads men to attach themselves to this or that party, so the scheme here proposed would have this merit, it

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would

would call forth the richest men, both of administration and opposition, to contribute their means towards humbling the pride of France. Surely then the chance of having more than an adequate return for their money sunk in this scheme is greater, than it is frequently, in the settlement of new colonies in America or the West Indies.

3dly. As the Dutch have now broken their public faith with Great Britain, in not fulfilling the terms of their treaties; does not this breach of compact, entitle her to retaliate, by a temporary seizure and appropriation of their money now in the British funds, for the purpose proposed in this letter? Considering the generous protection, that the Dutch experienced

perienced from this country, in the Duke of Marlborough's, and Mareſchal Saxe's wars, this meaſure in the eye of political neceſſity, can be deemed no more than an honeſt repayment for what money we formerly ſpent, in ſupport of them*. Their receiving more than an adequate proportion of territorial property, in America, or the Weſt Indies, in return for what money they advance, would certainly repay them better, than the preſent intereſt, they draw from the Britiſh funds. This manner of reducing our public debt, would in the courſe of two or three campaigns, oblige France, Spain and Holland to accept of any terms, remove Dr. Price's

* See Dean Swift's Hiſtory of John Bull, as an excellent comment upon this ſubject.

mournful prophecies concerning the future fate of our funds, and give general satisfactions to foreign nations, to see the public perfidy of the Dutch made subservient to the interest of the British empire. When we oblige them to purchase territorial property under the British government, we prevent the annual exportation of immense sums of interest now remitted to them.

4thly. Would not this new method of carrying on war against France, Spain, and Holland, unite all her subjects, who possess property in the West Indies, to remonstrate against the present proceedings of their ministers in regard to America? When they come to consider, that the total loss of their possessions in that part
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of the globe will be the consequence, it is more than any set of ministers dare hazard, merely to gratify their thirst of ambition and revenge against Great Britain. It may likewise be fairly presumed, that individuals of many nations in Europe would embark their fortunes upon such an Enterprize, which would be the means of preventing France from disturbing the common peace of other nations for the future. Her conduct in aiding and abetting the Americans has certainly been contrary to the good faith of treaties, and it is chimerical to suppose, that the powers of Europe would wish to see another power arise upon the other side of the Atlantic independent of any of them, and whose form of civil government is diametrically

opposite to that, which is prevalent upon their own continent.

In supporting the balance of continental power, Great Britain has lost much blood and treasure, the consequence of which has been that she has checked the ambitious views of the court of France, who under Lewis the fourteenth aimed at universal monarchy. At that time there was no single nation upon the continent, that could rival France in point of military strength. As she threatened to swallow up the various States of the German empire, they formed a junto of alliance under the title of Allies, to which Great Britain acceded, and was the key-stone that held together the various interests combined against her. When we

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consider the state of Europe then and what it is now, what a different prospect presents itself to our view ! The tables at present are reversed with France ; in Germany she dare scarce shew her arms, since Prussia, Russia, and Austria are now each of them a match for her, in regard to a numerous and well-disciplined army. Conscious of this restraint upon her power, and seeing now, that Great Britain draws resources of strength from Germany, she has paid more attention to increase her strength by sea, than she ever did before. Whatever then is *plus* to her in this respect, is so much *minus* to the British empire, therefore by the acquisition of Corsica, and assistance given to the Americans, she has certainly reduced, in some degree, the naval strength of Great Britain. It becomes us

now

now therefore to raise up some power in the Mediterranean, that will curb the restless and ambitious spirit of the house of Bourbon, which never can be done more effectually, than by pursuing the plans suggested in these letters. Though many have made it their business of late to damp the military ardour of this country, by painting the situation of it in such colours, as if we were driven to our last shifts of warlike expedient; however it is shewn in the present letters, that Great Britain has it still in her power to play so deep a game, as will fully bring back America to a proper allegiance. This is only to be done by a speedy anticipation of military Enterprise in Europe.

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The introduction of the Russians into the Mediterranean would fully answer this purpose, and dispel that cloud which is ready to break over the British empire, from the combined efforts of France, Spain and Holland. That other nations of Europe are perhaps pleased to see the formidable power of Great Britain, in some degree, brought down to a level with themselves, it may fairly be presumed, from the account given by the ingenious author of *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Germany*. But still, in point of public gratitude, Prussia, Russia, and Austria, lie under ten thousand more obligations to Great Britain, than they do to France. As contrasted to her political character, what a fair picture does that of England present to our view

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in the annals of Europe? On the one side we view an upright Judge, conscientiously and honestly supporting the cause of liberty and public virtue.

“ On the other side, up rises
 BELIAL, in act more graceful and humane;
 A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seem'd
 For dignity compos'd, and high exploit:
 But all was false and hollow; tho' his tongue
 Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason, to perplex and dash
 Maturest counsels.”

Such is the present state of the dispute between Great Britain and France. If the political writers of the former, instead of spending their time in wrangling about abstract principles of civil government, would exercise their invention more in finding out the weak side, where we
 might

might attack our natural enemies, they would render much more essential service to their King and country.

“ Then our Great Potentate would on his
throne
Sit undisturb'd, and England's ancient name,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
It's mischief, and purge off the baser fire
Victorious.”

The bounties given by the subscribers to the soldiers, who are to serve upon the expedition, would call forth more men to offer their service than the public exigency would require; the term of service to continue only during the expedition. This method is agreeable to the spirit of the late act of parliament for better recruiting the army, which limits the

term of service to three years, and abolishes that barbarous custom of making foldiers flaves for life.

The public fpirit of Great Britain has been fo long kept under, by the forlorn hope of an American conquest, that it is now full time to call it forth by fome grand and important expedition, againft the infular poffeffions of France, Spain, and Holland. It is only by beating them, that we can bring the American colonies to terms of accommodation: until our natural enemies are deprived of their moft important poffeffions in the Weft Indies, as in 1760, it will always be their inclination and intereft, to fow the feeds of diffention, between Great Britain and her colonies in America. It is
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evident to common observation and experience, that an offensive war is far preferable to a defensive. An expedition, therefore, fitted out upon the principle suggested in this letter, against St. Domingo, Martinico, or any other island, belonging to our enemies, would force them to come to a decisive, naval engagement to relieve the place attacked. Besides, when the attack is carried home to the settlements of our natural enemies, it will call off their attention from succouring the American colonies, and will give us more time and opportunity to enter upon terms of accommodation with them. It is clear as the light of day, that if the American colonies establish their independency of Great Britain, France and Spain will then call
 forth

forth all the military force of America ; not only to defend their own settlements, but likewise to reduce all our possessions in the West Indies. The scattered possessions of Great Britain in that part of the globe, will always clog her military exertions, by calling off the attention of her fleet, from an offensive to a defensive war. This circumstance proves the importance of reducing the larger islands in that part of the world, in preference to them of inferior note.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

S I R,

WHEN we come to consider all the prosperous and calamitous events, that have happened to Great Britain, during the present war; we shall find it a defect in naval conduct, that a strong fleet of observation has not been kept at Gibraltar. This measure would not only have pro-

protected our commerce, in the Mediterranean sea; but likewise broke the chain of connexion, that the French and Spaniards have enjoyed of late, in their naval operations, both in the Mediterranean and upon this side of it. Two recent and important facts prove the truth of this assertion—first, in the success that attended our fleet in going to and returning from Gibraltar: and secondly, the unfortunate capture of our outward bound East and West India fleets. The whole naval history of former wars, is a full and satisfactory comment upon this proposition; that there is no present point of possession we have, from which, we can annoy our natural enemies more effectually, than from Gibraltar. It merits observation, however, that sometimes, a fleet is wind-bound

bound in the Bay of Gibraltar, for want of a Levant or Easterly wind, to enable it to stem the strong current, that runs in through the Straits. It would therefore be a point of great consideration to the British navy, to have in our possession, the island of Tercera or any other of the Azores, that has a good harbour, and is so situated, as to intercept every ship from France or Spain, going to, or returning from any part of America. Great Britain might purchase this island of the Portuguese, upon reasonable terms, as a guarantee of her other Western islands and possessions in America. The possession of such an island would enable Great Britain, to attend more, to the intercepting of our enemies reinforcements of ships and men, going out to the West Indies or America.

It is surely sounder policy in a commercial state, like the British, to have it in her power, to intercept the productions of her enemies colonies, than even to reduce these colonies under her power, since the expence of reduction, and the maintenance of garrisons and fleets in distant parts of the globe, are so great, and so detrimental to the health of our men. When the French and Spaniards suffered the property of British merchants, to be condemned in their ports, under the sanction of American commissions, contrary to the good faith of treaties and the established laws of nations, it is singular, that the novelty of the insult, did not suggest the following method of reprisal; viz. That our frigates and privateers might under Algerine and Tunisian commissions, have

have carried on the same piratical mode of capture of French and Spanish ships, as they began, in regard to British, under the name of American commissions.

That individuals in Great Britain are rich, notwithstanding the public is poor, is a consequence flowing from their immense funded debt. It will always however be the interest of private men in it, to support the fabric of public credit, by fitting out privateers, to distress the trade of our natural enemies. As the strength of the nation, in this respect, was never fully known, till the present dispute with France and Spain, to give it all due encouragement, therefore, and stability in the Mediterranean, the following plan should be pursued by government; viz.

That the merchants of Great Britain should be empowered by public bounties, to enter into privateering indentures with the various states upon the coast of Barbary, to annoy the trade of the above powers. If both of these nations are, at present, afraid of these piratical states, they surely would have much more occasion to be so, when the corsairs that are to cruise against them, are built upon the English construction, and commanded by British officers. By this measure, we should have more men to man the navy, as two thirds of the crews of these privateers, might be composed of Moors, or the scum of every nation in the Mediterranean. The governors of the states of Barbary, would give all encouragement to such associated schemes of adventure, since they might have so much,

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per cent, upon the cargoes of the captures. This would give them an ample opportunity, of retaliating upon the Spaniards, for their late invasion of Algiers. Such a good understanding between Great Britain and the states of Barbary, would always bring proper supplies of fresh provisions to the garrison of Gibraltar, and our merchants would run less risk of their captures in the Mediterranean, being retaken, than when they fit out their privateers, from the ports of London, Bristol or Liverpool.

I shall conclude this letter, Sir, with a few observations upon the consequences, likely to happen to the commerce of Great Britain, from the present naval alliance
of

of the Northern Powers of Europe, and from the Dutch in particular.

1st. When no French, Spanish, nor American privateers are allowed to harbour, in the northern ports of Europe, it may be a great inducement, for our East and West India trade in time of war, and during the summer months, to prefer the passage round by the north of Scotland, to that up the English channel. In this tract of voyage, they avoid running the gauntlet of the French and Spanish men of war and privateers, that swarm in the chops of the English channel. It becomes daily therefore of more importance to the commercial interests of this country, to make proper naval establishments, in some of the Western parts of Ireland,

Ireland, and upon the Northern coast of Scotland. Particularly, Cromartie Bay should certainly be fortified, and have all the proper establishments of a naval dock and dock yard, for the following reasons.

1st. For our men of war to refit at, that may convoy our East or West India Trade, round the North of Scotland, in time of war during the summer months, or other ships going to the various ports of the Baltick.

2d. Considering the public perfidy of the Dutch, in not fulfilling the terms of their treaties with Great Britain, it becomes a point of great national consideration and importance, to exclude them entirely from the great herring fishery,

fishery, upon the northern coast of Scotland. It is a matter, that is worthy of speculation, that as matters stand at present, in so extensive an empire as the British, we shall in the long run of events, incidental to all commercial states, be deprived of some of our distant resources of commerce. It becomes therefore a point of importance, to weigh well this question; what may be in future our richest resources of commerce at home? Surely the herring fishery may justly be esteemed one of them. As it first brought the Dutch to their meridian of naval strength and commercial opulence, so an absolute exclusion of them from it, may perhaps make it one day or other, one of the chief pillars of our naval strength and resources.

3d. Had government after the rebellion of 1745 fortified the entrance of Cromartie Bay, and made the proper establishment, of a royal dock and dock yard there, it certainly would have been, of much more public utility, than the fortifications of Fort George near Inverness, upon the erection of which, so many thousand pounds were expended. The captures made by Paul Jones in the Northern Seas, show the necessity of preventing such like happening to our coal and Baltick trade for the future. It is evident, that Cromartie Bay will one day or other, be a place of naval importance, considering all the consequences, that may in future happen to our trade, from a Dutch war, and the naval union of the

the Northern Powers. Portsmouth and Sheerness are too remote from the scene of action, where adventurers, like Paul Jones may hurt the interests of our coal and Baltick trade, before a proper check can be given to them. As naval establishments are at present, it is evident, that privateering adventurers may have a full fortnight's range of depredation, upon the Northern Coast of Scotland, and not much less, upon that of England, without any chance of being intercepted, by our men of war. As Buchanan the historian justly observes, that Cromartie Bay is the *Portus Salutis* of the North Sea, so it may justly be regarded, as the proper point of naval anticipation, from which we may prevent,

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the future roving of such adventurers,
as Jones and Thurot.

Considering the commercial consequences, that may happen to the British empire, from the powerful states now leagued against it, it becomes daily a point of greater importance to communicate to the public every idea, that tends to increase and strengthen our naval force. The following proposal, Sir, in my opinion is so apparently calculated to do this, that I shall beg leave to submit it to the consideration of the three interests concerned in it, viz. government, the East India company, and the ships husbands belonging to that company.

As government are now going to re-
new the charter of the East-India com-
pany, would it not be a point of great
national importance, to increase the scan-
tlings of their shipping, so as to serve as
54 gun ships upon any emergency in the
navy. Whatever additional expence takes
place in the construction and equipping
of such ships, this to be made up jointly
by government and the East-India com-
pany, at the rate of so much per ton.
The same idea should be extended upon
a smaller scale, to the ships employed in
the West-India trade.

It is a naval and military maxim, that
we should fight our enemies with the
same or a superior degree of strength,
than

than they oppose to us. As the Dutch therefore are the most formidable rivals in India, to the British East-India company, it becomes the interest of the latter, to regulate the future construction of their shipping, by a mean taken from the Dutch sixty-gun ships, and their ships employed in the East-India trade. That on the one hand, our East-India ships may be enabled to act upon the defensive, with respect to their men of war, and upon the offensive, in regard to their East Indiamen. To make it the interest of the ships husbands, to accede to the proposal here made, our government and the East-India company should jointly make up to them, the additional expence of altering their docks for their shipping at Blackwall, &c. &c.

LETTER

that they oppose to us. As the Dutch
therefore are the most formidable rivals
in India, to the British East-India com-
pany, it becomes the interest of the lat-
ter to regulate the future competition
of their shipping, by a means taken from
the Dutch East-India company, and their ships
employed in the East-India trade. That
on the one hand, our East-India ships
may be enabled to go upon the delin-
que, with respect to their men of war,
and upon the other, in regard to their
East-India trade. To make it the interest
of the ships hands, to accede to the
proposals here made, our Government and
the East-India company should jointly
make up to them, the additional expenses
of sending their boats for their shipping
at Blackwell, &c. &c.

Q U E R Y

Q U E R Y

Addressed to the Board of Admiralty, and the Proprietors and Ships Husbands of the East-India Company.

AS upon an actual Survey, made by one of the Assistant Builders, of the Dock Yard at Blackwall, the Ships employed at present in the East-India Trade, are deemed equal to carry fifty or sixty Guns, in point of Scantlings and Strength of Timbers—Is it not therefore a Point of National Importance, that such Ships should have the proper Ports in their Sides, immediately struck out, so as to act as Ships of the above Force, either in the Service of the East-India Company or Government, in case of a Junction, of the Fleets of France, Holland and Spain in the British Channel?

1st. The immediate Adoption of this Idea, will add above twenty Sail of capital Ships, to the Naval List of Great Britain, to serve as a Fleet of Observation at Home in the British Channel, without any Inconvenience or Detriment, to the general Interest of the Proprietors or Ships Husbands of the East-India Company. Such Ships will always be so nigh at Home, that they can be immediately taken up for their outward-bound Voyages.

2d. The Adoption of this Idea will add considerably, to the Security of the East-India Company's Settlements Abroad, when their Ships can act as a Fleet of Observation, in case of any Attack from their Enemies in that Part of the Globe.

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LETTER V.

S I R,

IT is a curious circumstance, that the present dispute with America has obliged the legislature of Great Britain, to alter the mode of punishment inflicted on felons. As the plan adopted in imitation of the French galleys is only to be regarded as a temporary one, I shall beg
leave

leave to prove the impropriety of it, from the following reasons, which when duly considered will convince you of the propriety of the scheme I mean to propose.

The plan now enforced is improper from the following reason, that the felons are all kept together, without any discrimination, of crime, rank or character. It may then justly be observed; is this circumstance, likely to improve these unfortunate men or not? No surely, since the last state of each individual's character must be more abandoned than the first. If he is possessed with one devil when he is sent from Newgate on board of the Hulk, he will certainly be possessed with seven, when the term of his punishment is expired.

Tho'

Tho' various kinds of government give rise to a diversity of modes of punishment, yet there are some fundamental principles, in which they should all agree.

1. The punishment should be proportionate to the offence. 2dly. The nature of it should be such as to have a tendency to reform the manners and morals of the delinquent. 3dly. The term and mode of present punishment should be such, as to serve as an apprenticeship to future industry. All these are self-evident propositions, and require only the following illustration to prove to the legislature of this country; that in the punishment of criminals in England, they adopted an improper method, in transporting them to America, and in the present mode,

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of

of making them work upon the Thames. To shew the absurdity of the first idea, it is only necessary to mention a similar one in Scotland. In that part of Great Britain, when a person commits an offence contrary to the good order and peace of the county he belongs to, the sheriff banishes him to the neighbouring county, or in other words gives him a passport to go and commit the same offence there. Thus the inhabitants of the Northern counties are enabled at the public charge to travel South to England, and have an interest in disturbing the peace of their country, since by that they are transported to a better. Such was the case with the gentlemen formerly transported to America.

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The proper mode of punishing felons in Great Britain or Ireland, should be to oblige them to work in coal or lead mines, as they do in Russia and Sweden. This measure would be attended with the following advantages to the public: 1st. The felons could maintain themselves in this kind of labour without burdening the community with a heavy charge, as they are at present. 2dly. The security of confinement is far more certain in a coal or lead mine, than on board of the hulk. A small guard at the mouth of the pit would be sufficient to keep in awe any number of felons below. If they are mutinous or refractory, and refuse to do the task of labour assigned them, the guard above can either starve them out of their

rebellious spirit, or adopt the method used by the Dutch: viz. By stopping the fire-engine they must either work or drown, as the proper reward of their obstinacy.

That it is now become a difficult matter to secure the felons on board of the hulks may easily be seen, from the late insurrections against their keepers, and from the number of them that have escaped at different times. It was an oversight in the legislature, when they passed the present act for the punishment of the convicts, that they did not fix upon some place more distant from the metropolis, where if any of them get loose from their confinement, there would be a greater probability of retaking them, before they reached

reached London, their den of concealment.

The best observation upon the criminal punishment of this country is this, that the term of punishment should always serve as an apprenticeship to future industry. That this would be the case, according to the present plan proposed, I shall prove from the following reason. That each felon before one year of his term of labour is expired would be sufficiently expert in the art of coal working or mining, so as to maintain himself, and have an overplus, which should be kept in the hands of the overseer, until the term of his punishment is expired. If he has behaved well, this sum of money should then be restored to him as the
proper

proper reward of his industry and reformation. In former times it was the mode of punishment for felons in Scotland, that they obliged them to work in the coal mines, but it was attended with this feudal rigour and severity, that the sins of the fathers were visited upon the children. If one of their children worked in the coal pit for one year and a day, he was to all purposes a bound slave for life. It is only within these three or four years, that an act of parliament was obtained to abolish a custom, so inconsistent with the ideas of humanity, and so disgraceful to the laws of that country. It was surely an oversight in the act for the abolition of jurisdictions in Scotland, that they did not include the above class of men, and emancipate them from

from their state of servitude. The merit of obtaining the above act may justly be claimed by the present coal proprietors of Scotland, and to their honour be it observed, that this act of parliament now completes the circle of freedom in Great Britain and Ireland, which never could be deemed so, as long as the above usage, so diametrically opposite to the true spirit of liberty, was left unabolished and unrepealed.

The scheme now said to be in agitation of erecting Task or Work-houses in the different counties of the kingdom, will be attended with the following inconveniences :

- 1st. The great expence of erecting them.
- 2dly. The undefined and uncertain mode of punishment, which will arise from the dif-

different caprice of so many overseers or task-masters, in so many different parts of the kingdom. 3dly. The term and mode of this punishment will never serve as an apprenticeship to future industry.

To obviate all these objections, was government to take the lease, or purchase the property, of a great coal work in the West, and of another in the North of England, these might serve as fixed places of punishment, which would be attended with more public advantages, than any other mode, hitherto proposed.

LETTER,

LETTER VI.

S I R,

EVERY person of military or political sagacity must regard it as an important oversight in this country, that in the beginning of the present dispute with America, the assistance of the Empress of Russia, was not solicited and secured by treaty. The countenance of whose

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arms,

arms, crowned with Turkish laurels, would have done this country more credit than hiring an army of German mercenaries.

Considering the commercial intercourse subsisting between Russia and Great Britain, it is for the mutual advantage of both nations to adopt jointly such coercive measures as will in their consequences break the power and alliance of the House of Bourbon. Before I proceed to lay before you, Sir, the scheme of politics necessary to be adopted, and the various advantages that would result from it to Russia and Great Britain, it is necessary to make the following observation, viz. That Russia wants only a port in the Mediterranean, to exercise her ships in navigation, which would render her a formidable rival to the Bourbon

bon alliance. As upon the Baltick side her freedom of navigation is cramped by the Danish fort that commands the Sound, so upon the side of the Black Sea she is confined by the Straits of the Dardanelles: the grand point then to be attained is an emancipation from these restraints upon her commerce. The two points of importance gained by the Russians in their last war with the Turks, were, 1st. The free navigation of these Straits, so as to open a communication with the Mediterranean; and, 2dly. The independency of the Crimea. The Empress knows well that she gained the former of these two advantages chiefly by the assistance the English gave her by refitting and careening her ships at Minorca, and from the number of their

seamen who served on board of her fleet. It is a fact well known, that without the conveniency of the harbour of Minorca the Russians could not have humbled the Grand Signior so much as they did last war. The immense force they had in the Mediterranean Sea was the means of making so great a diversion of the Turkish forces both in Greece and near Constantinople, (the seat of empire), that Romanzoff had always a manifest superiority in the field.

Having thus proved the importance of Minorca to the Russians, I proceed to prove the importance of the total cession of it to the Empress upon the following terms. That she assist Great Britain at present with a strong fleet and powerful
army

army in the present war with France and Spain. No person can point out of what great commercial use Minorca is to us, but a dead weight of expence hanging about the neck of this country. It is a fact well known among the officers of the navy, that the loss of it last war, after the affair of Admiral Byng, made our cruisers in the Mediterranean more vigilant than they had been before.

The cession of Minorca to the Russians would be attended with the following present advantages to Great Britain.

1st. It would save an immense annual expence in the maintenance of the garrisons of Fort St. Philip and the other Forts of inferior note in that island, and
would

would enable us to double garrison Gibraltar upon any emergency.

2dly. It would be introducing a new rival power into the Mediterranean to humble the pride of the French and Spaniards, which would render the Bourbon alliance less formidable in the eyes of Europe than it seems at present.

3dly. The consideration of this cession to the Russians would call forth the utmost exertion of their empire in the present war.

Having thus by induction from facts proved the importance of Minorca to be so great to the Russian empire, that without it their fleet could not have kept the

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Mediterranean Sea in their last war with the Turks: and having ventured to assert that this island is of little or no importance in its present state to the commerce of Great Britain, I proceed to prove that the cession of it to the Empress of Russia will be attended with the greatest political advantages to this country, and to the commercial interests of both nations.

I shall beg leave to appeal the merits of the above particulars and the following propositions, to the candid consideration of the Members of both Houses of Parliament.

1st. Let us, on the one hand, consider, that the American colonies at present, oppose the force of Great Britain, under the protection of two powerful king-

kingdoms, when she has not one ally to befriend her upon a liberal idea. Is it not therefore, a point of the greatest importance, to ascertain whether or not the cession here proposed of the Island of Minorca, or any other commercial concession, will secure to us the assistance of Russia; so as to anticipate the fatal consequences, that must happen to the British commerce, in the long run of a contest, carried on under so many disadvantages of defence and conquest at the same time?

2dly. Let the financiers of Russia again, on the other hand, estimate the immense expence of transporting and maintaining their fleet and army in the Archiepelago last war: let them state the importance of the present proposition of having a
fixed

fixed point of possession in the Mediterranean, they will find a great reduction of expence accruing to their state from the following circumstances.

1st. The vicinity of Minorca to Marseilles and the coast of France, will deter the French from taking an active part against the Empress of Russia, so as to supply the Turks with officers and military stores in time of war.

2dly. The conveniency of this harbour is such, that by all seamen it is reckoned the completest in the Mediterranean to contain a large fleet. 1st. It is landlocked, and consequently free from all the inconveniency of a swelling sea. 2dly.

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Close under the shore there is from ten to fifteen fathoms depth of water.

Supposing the Russians were to assist Great Britain with twenty ships of the line and twenty thousand men in the present war, when that is effected, Minorca should be ceded to them. This would be the best offensive and defensive league that we could enter into. With the good will of the Barbary states and the co-operation of the British fleets, we could keep the coasts of France and Spain in the continual alarm of an invasion, and make the Grand Signior tremble in his seraglio at Constantinople, for his islands in the Archiepelago. Twenty thousand men at Minorca would make a diversion of fifty thousand men upon the

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the coast of Greece, and in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, which would increase the strength of the Russians upon the Crimea. Thus it might always be in the power of Great Britain and Russia to harass the troops of the above powers by continual alarms, and put their respective governments to immense expence in erecting additional fortifications for the security of their coasts.

Great Britain with the alliance of Russia upon the forementioned terms, would always have it in her power to humble the pride and insolence of the House of Bourbon, command the neutrality of the Italian states, and assist the states of Barbary against the power of Spain.

To conclude this political and military dissertation, have not the Moors a national antipathy to the French and Spaniards? Have not the latter lately felt the truth of this assertion in their attempt to invade Algiers? If the Moors were so able to repel this invasion, does it not prove to demonstration that Great Britain might always have it in her power to draw an army from the continent of Africa to invade Spain through Gibraltar, or to attack from Minorca the southern provinces of France? The issue of this depends upon the solution of the following question. Are Mahometan prejudices so strong that military experience will not even point out the necessity of overcoming them?

them? If it is answered in the negative, the only step preparatory to the execution of the scheme here proposed is, That proper officers should be sent from the garrisons of Minorca and Gibraltar, to teach the Moorish infantry the European art of war. What the Numidian cavalry were at Cannæ, the Spaniards might soon know as well as the Romans did in former times.

It is ridiculous to suppose, that the navy of Great Britain is any longer to reign sovereign of the ocean, if America establish her independency. Considered only as a certain source from whence this country can derive naval stores, independent of every other country, the subjugation
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of it or alliance, are of infinite importance to Great Britain.

The scheme here suggested has this merit, that it points out the most effectual means of humbling the pride of France, of securing the good will of the Empress of Russia, and of introducing a scheme of African politics, which will call home the attention of France from the affairs of America, to those of more vital importance to her peace at home. For when the various events of past ages are laid open to our view, when the different revolutions of the European kingdoms are discovered to us, when the curtain that veils the destiny of mighty states and empires is withdrawn, and the page of history is spread before us, then may

we

we justly conclude that scarce any other scheme than the one proposed in this tract, can ever clip the wings of the perfidy of France, or prevent her from being for the future what she hath always been, the common firebrand of war among the European nations.

F I N I S.

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